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INFLUENZA IN ALASKA

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

SIXTY-FIFTH CONGRESS

THIRD SESSION

ON

S. J. RESOLUTION 199

A JOINT RESOLUTION FOR RELIEF IN ALASKA

Printed for the use of the Committee on Appropriations



~~Dup. 1922~~
~~D. of D.~~

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OFFICE

INFLUENZA IN ALASKA.

MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 1919.

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, D. C.

The committee met at 2.30 o'clock p. m.

Present: Senators Martin (chairman), Overman, Smith of Maryland, Shafroth, Smith of Arizona, Pollock, Smoot, Jones of Washington, Curtis, Kenyon, and Calder.

Thomas Riggs, jr., governor of Alaska; Rupert Blue, Surgeon General of the Public Health Service; and Philander P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education, appeared.

The committee thereupon proceeded to the consideration of the joint resolution (S. J. Res. 199) introduced by Senator Jones of Washington, for relief in Alaska.

STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS RIGGS, JR., GOVERNOR OF ALASKA.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee was called primarily to consider a joint resolution introduced by Senator Jones of Washington, appropriating \$200,000 for the relief of the influenza sufferers in Alaska.

Senator JONES. Gov. Riggs of Alaska is here, and Surg. Gen. Blue.

The CHAIRMAN. Governor, we shall be glad to hear what you have to present about this matter.

Gov. RIGGS. Thank you, Senator. Perhaps I had better give you a brief history of how this happened.

Following the line of steamship transportation from Seattle, influenza broke out at first along the coast towns, and it rapidly extended to all of the small towns in southeastern Alaska—all of the native villages, and the isolated communities. At Nome, which is in the northern part of Alaska, just before the freeze up—when transportation ceased for the year—influenza broke out; and, according to the last report I have, there have been approximately 1,000 deaths; 90 per cent of which were among the Eskimos. That has left on our hands over 150 Eskimo orphans. At the outlying places, like Kodiak, where it was extremely hard to get any assistance, there were 40 or 50 deaths. There have been deaths all over the Territory, 90 per cent of which were among the Eskimos. I estimate that there have been close to 2,000 deaths in the Territory, and the epidemic is still raging.

As to the Territorial funds, I had a fund of \$5,000 only supplied by the Territory, which was expended almost before the epidemic started. We tried to stop the spread of the epidemic, but were unsuccessful. It has now gone beyond the Territory's power to care for it.

The expense of traveling in Alaska is enormous. I sent one doctor 400 miles by dog team to visit a stricken community. He got there,

rendered what relief he could, and then was taken with the influenza himself and died, leaving all of the lower Yukon River without any medical attention whatsoever.

The Eskimos, particularly, have been the worst sufferers. They have no resistance to the disease. We have a great many of the bodies left unburied. The best price I can get for burying an Indian in that frozen ground is \$30 an Indian. We have sent out relief expeditions in connection with the Bureau of Education, to visit the outlying districts. They have rendered a great deal of assistance; but we have not been able to cure the disease, or to take care of those who are indigent.

I felt it necessary to issue instructions to the officials of the Bureau of Education to do what they could for those who were starving, the destitute, the orphans, whether I had funds to do it with or not. I took the responsibility of that, hoping that Congress would grant me relief. The estimates of the Bureau of Education are that there has been spent in the vicinity of Nome, with the Seward Peninsula, at present some \$70,000. The other estimates which I have in, which are only partial, for the curative and preventive measures, make the expense incurred up to date \$107,500.

Senator JONES. How much of that has been spent?

Gov. RIGGS. None.

Senator OVERMAN. Who represents the Surgeon General in Alaska?

Gov. RIGGS. The Surgeon General has several assistants—field assistants, I believe they are called, Gen. Blue—

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes.

Gov. RIGGS. At the ports of entry. He has at present Dr. Krolich, of his office, who is doing what he can in looking after that part of Alaska which is not frozen up.

Senator OVERMAN. When were you in Alaska?

Gov. RIGGS. I left on the 25th of November.

Senator OVERMAN. When are you going back?

Gov. RIGGS. I am going back on the 17th of January.

Senator OVERMAN. It is unusual to allow the governor of a State or Territory to expend moneys in this regard when we have a department to expend the money. The work in this country has all been done by the Surgeon General, but I notice that this joint resolution asks that the money may be expended by the governor of Alaska.

Gov. RIGGS. Senator, I do not care by whom it is spent, so long as we get the relief. Somebody had to take the responsibility of doing it. The Surgeon General's office had not sufficient funds to enter into that work. It was a case of letting people starve and children perish unless I took that responsibility. I was asked by the Bureau of Education to take that responsibility, and I took it. Whether I was wrong or not, I do not know; but I could not see people die.

Senator OVERMAN. You did it by cablegram from this country?

Gov. RIGGS. I got in touch with the various communities in Alaska and told them to use every effort to help the sufferers.

Senator OVERMAN. What I mean is, you were not on the field when it happened?

Gov. RIGGS. I was in Alaska; yes, sir. I left on the 25th of November.

Senator SMOOT. How much money did you say you had already expended?

Gov. RIGGS. The partial expense incurred is \$107,500.

Senator SMOOT. Are you asking for an appropriation to cover that amount?

Gov. RIGGS. I am asking for an appropriation to cover this amount, to continue the relief work that we are doing up there, and to take care of the orphans of the Indians until such time as Congress can take action in the regular bill.

Senator SMOOT. The way this joint resolution is worded, I think it would not apply to expenditures already made, but it would apply to expenditures to be used by the governor.

Gov. RIGGS. I would ask, if the committee will favorably consider this joint resolution, that it be made to cover expenses already incurred.

Senator SMOOT. That is the reason why I asked the question.

Senator JONES. I will say, Mr. Chairman, that I drew up this joint resolution hurriedly after I had talked with the governor. The main thing will be for the committee to decide what it thinks it ought to do, and then frame whatever provision will cover it. That is the idea.

Senator SHAFROTH. Governor, have you heard as to the conditions up there at the present time?

Gov. RIGGS. I have a telegram here addressed to me under date of January 3 reading as follows:

Only bills received at office so far are from nearby towns, amounting to \$5,000. Nome alone estimates 70,000 already obligated and expenses still climbing. Second epidemic about over on coast, excepting Cordova. Still raging along lower Yukon and Kuskokwim. Wire from Marshall to-day—

Marshall is on the lower Yukon River—

says 30 per cent native adult men died that vicinity. Unless funds supplied, purchase provisions, and maintenance orphans, women, and children will starve. Dr. Lamb died at Marshall.

He was the doctor I sent by dog team.

Have received no estimates quarantine expense interior towns or large coast towns. Shall I wire for their estimates? Mrs. L. D. Henderson died last week.

She was the wife of the commissioner of education.

Senator SHAFROTH. And she died of influenza?

Gov. RIGGS. She died of influenza; yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Who is that telegram from?

Gov. RIGGS. That is signed by my secretary, Mr. Cramer.

Here is a telegram from Mr. Evans, who is the assistant superintendent of the Bureau of Education at Nome. The superintendent of the Bureau of Education at Nome died of influenza. This is addressed to Hon. P. P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education, Washington, D. C., and is dated Nome, Alaska, January 2, 1919:

Ten villages this district affected. Three wiped out entirely; others average 85 per cent deaths. Majority of children of affected villages saved by relief parties sent by the Bureau of Education. Teachers in stricken villages all sick; two dead; rest recovering. Total number of deaths reported 750; probably 25 per cent; this number frozen to death before help arrived. Over 300 children to be cared for, majority of whom are orphans. Am feeding and caring for surviving population of five large villages. Seven relief hospitals operated in affected villages; no trained nurses or physicians available.

but splendid work done by white people in charge. Cost to date estimated \$70,000 for native relief alone; will need about \$15,000 this month. May be necessary send relief several quarantined villages owing to regulations preventing natives from trapping and can not purchase necessities. Impossible at this time to lift quarantine zones in outlying affected villages. Appalling and beyond description. Am giving 90 orphans to mission at Nome to care for at \$10 per month, but hope department will plan for large industrial training school this district next summer. Splendid opportunity for educational advancement for the Eskimos.

That is the condition at Nome.

At Kodiak, which is an island in western Alaska, off toward the Aleutian Islands, they had some 300 cases of influenza; and owing to the fact that mail contracts had been canceled there, there was no transportation.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. Who lives on Kodiak Island?

Gov. RIGGS. There are about 50 whites and about 500 Indians, if I remember correctly.

Senator SHAFROTH. How many died?

Gov. RIGGS. From the reports that I had about November 25, before leaving there, 40 had died and about 300 were ill. The naval collier *Brutus*, with officers of the Public Health Service, was sent up there, and afforded some relief. That is the most northerly point that they can reach on account of ice conditions. The rest of the Territory of Alaska has to be reached by dog team. The expense of traveling by dog team is terrific, and it is extremely difficult work. I know what traveling by dog team means. I have traveled over a great part of Alaska by dog team. You have the short days, the hard, cold weather, and you only make 20 or 30 miles a day over the unbroken trails. The conditions there are such as have never happened before in the history of the Territory.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. How many people do you estimate live in Alaska now—I mean, the American population and the Indian population? Have you any means of knowing?

Gov. RIGGS. My estimate of the white population of Alaska this year is about 20,000 only. Two years ago it was about 45,000. They were drawn into the Army. Twelve per cent of our population—not of the men, but 12 per cent of our population—went into the Army, and the rest of them went into the shipyards and other war work.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. And if you keep up the "conservation" that they have been practicing up there, all the balance of them will leave or die in the next few years.

Gov. RIGGS. I think perhaps our conservation policies might be remedied to a great extent. There are about 25,000 native population scattered all over the Territory.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. Are they Eskimos, or Indians?

Gov. RIGGS. They are Eskimos, Aleuts, and Indians—the three branches of native population.

Senator OVERMAN. Then there are not more than 45,000 in the whole Territory, whites and Indians?

Gov. RIGGS. No, sir; not at present.

Senator SHAFROTH. What is the number at present compared to the number 10 years ago?

Gov. RIGGS. The number of whites?

Senator SHAFROTH. Yes.

Gov. RIGGS. Ten years ago I believe there were about 50,000 white people in Alaska.

Senator SHAFROTH. And now there are 25,000?

Gov. RIGGS. Hardly 25,000; about 20,000, I estimate.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. That is on account of our treatment of Alaska.

Senator OVERMAN. Governor, are they still building that railroad up there?

Gov. RIGGS. Yes, sir.

Senator OVERMAN. Are they doing any good with it?

Gov. RIGGS. It will do a great deal of good. It will open up a great country. Our people are beginning to come back to us now. Since the armistice, the people are beginning to flock back. The great mines, that were only working one shift on account of shortage of men when I left there on the 25th of November, are now working two shifts, and they figure that shortly after the first of the year they will have enough men to work three shifts.

Senator OVERMAN. How far have they finished the railroad?

Gov. RIGGS. From Seward it is completed to about Mile 250. Then there is about 50 or 60 miles completed on the interior end, with a small branch road of 46 miles that was acquired. There is a branch into the Matanuska coal fields of 38 miles which is completed.

Senator WEEKS. Governor, is that branch so connected that it can reach the coast?

Gov. RIGGS. Yes, sir.

Senator WEEKS. I notice in your report that coal at Nome was selling at forty or fifty or sixty dollars a ton; I have forgotten the exact figure, but not less than \$40.

Gov. RIGGS. It was \$35 when I was there this last summer, and they said they were going to raise it to \$40 before the winter set in.

Senator WEEKS. If there is a connection with the coast from the coal fields, how is it possible to have coal sell so high as that?

Gov. RIGGS. The coal has not been mined commercially yet. It has been mined for the operation of the railroad, but has not yet been put on sale, except locally.

Senator SHAFROTH. There have been no leases of coal lands made up there, have there?

Gov. RIGGS. Yes, sir; there are two leases in the Matanuska field.

Senator SHAFROTH. On what size territory?

Gov. RIGGS. Those are the 2,560-acre tracts.

Senator Shafroth. And are they working those?

Gov. RIGGS. They are prospecting them by diamond drill at the present time.

Senator SHAFROTH. There is no production from them?

Gov. RIGGS. No production, except from the Government mines there, at present. That is the Matanuska coal field. In the Bering River coal field they shipped out some coal this year, and are prepared to ship out coal as soon as they can get ships to carry it; but they have been unable to get ships to carry it. I have been unable even to get ships to carry coal from Alaskan coal fields to Alaskan ports.

Senator SMOOT. Governor, may I ask you a few questions about the estimated expense incurred? You stated that it was \$107,000. Do

I understand that that \$107,000 is the estimate of expenses incurred under your order?

Gov. RIGGS. Under my orders and the orders of the Bureau of Education; yes, sir—the authorizations.

Senator SMOOT. To what extent have the Bureau of Education ordered this expenditure of money?

Gov. RIGGS. They have asked me if I would authorize it, and just in the interest of humanity there I have taken the responsibility and said that I would authorize it.

Senator SMOOT. The authorization has always come from you?

Gov. RIGGS. From me; yes, sir.

Senator SMOOT. Has the Territory paid anything toward this amount at all?

Gov. RIGGS. Only the \$5,000 fund.

Senator SMOOT. That you had appropriated for that purpose?

Gov. RIGGS. For that purpose; yes, sir.

Senator SMOOT. Have the people in Alaska assisted in any way?

Gov. RIGGS. The Red Cross chapters have spent all the money that they had on hand.

Senator SMOOT. How much was that?

Gov. RIGGS. In the last Red Cross drive they raised approximately \$160,000. Twenty-five per cent of that, or about \$40,000, remained in the Territory.

Senator SMOOT. What has the Government done?

Gov. RIGGS. Nothing, sir.

Senator SMOOT. The Health Department of the Government has done nothing?

Gov. RIGGS. I beg your pardon; the Health Department of the Government has authorized the hiring of doctors and nurses where they could be obtained, and the purchase of medicines. I do not think the Health Department has had sufficient funds to authorize the carrying on of this work.

Senator SMOOT. When does your legislature meet?

Gov. RIGGS. In March. The legislature has very limited funds at its disposal. Our taxing power is very limited. In fact, a large proportion of our taxes is levied by the Federal Government, and goes into what is called the Alaskan fund, and is arbitrarily put 65 per cent into roads, 25 per cent for education, and 10 per cent for the relief of destitution.

Senator KENYON. How much do you raise by territorial taxation?

Gov. RIGGS. We raise about half a million dollars.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. What is the rate per cent of your taxation generally?

Gov. RIGGS. We have no rate per cent of taxation. Our taxes are raised principally on the production of salmon canneries—4 cents per case of salmon. Then there are small taxes, which do not amount to much, on the net earnings of gold mines and on the net earnings of railroads and telephone companies; but, as I say, that does not amount to much. Our principal taxation is on fish.

Senator SHAFROTH. The amount of land in private ownership, as I understand, is only one-fiftieth of 1 per cent. Is that true?

Gov. RIGGS. I think very probably that is true; yes. There is very little land in private ownership.

Senator SHAFROTH. When you referred to the fact that the mines were being worked now by shifts, you meant precious-metal mines; you did not mean the coal mines, did you?

Gov. RIGGS. I meant the precious-metal mines—gold mines.

Senator SHAFROTH. Did I understand you to say that some of these coal mines are now shipping coal?

Gov. RIGGS. They are prepared to ship coal, but they have no transportation for it.

Matters in connection with the influenza got so desperate up there that I wired to the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service for relief. He was anxious to do all he possibly could. As I say, in connection with the Red Cross, he sent doctors and nurses up there to the ice-free portions of Alaska. The Navy Department cooperated by the use of the collier *Brutus*, which they sent up there for that purpose, and which is up there now, I believe, with Dr. Krolich, who represents the Surgeon General. The *Brutus* is still up there, is she not?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes.

Gov. RIGGS. Gentlemen, you can not conceive of what a terrible thing it is in that country, in wintertime, to have an epidemic, with no means of getting around, no doctors, no nurses, not even medical supplies, because medicine can not get there, and just have to send people around to do the best they can. When a native has a death in his house, he abandons the house and leaves the dead in there.

The CHAIRMAN. What did you say the income from taxation in Alaska is, altogether?

Gov. RIGGS. The income from the Territorial taxation—I will give it to you exactly, Senator—

Senator KENYON. You said half a million dollars.

Gov. RIGGS. I said about half a million dollars. The total receipts from all sources were \$1,056,477.06. Total disbursements, various appropriations made by Territorial legislature, \$373,953.95. Balance of cash on hand December 31, 1917, \$682,493.11.

Senator SHAFROTH. Is that for one year, or the biennial term?

Gov. RIGGS. That is for the one year, sir.

Senator KENYON. What has become of all that surplus?

Gov. RIGGS. We have that balance on hand still in the Territorial treasury.

Senator SMITH of Maryland. Over \$600,000?

Gov. RIGGS. Over \$600,000.

Senator KENYON. Can you not have a special session of the legislature to take care of this matter?

Gov. RIGGS. It takes 45 days to call a special session of the legislature, and that would have been too late.

Senator SMOOR. You have not any doubt, have you, that if you took the bull by the horns and spent \$100,000 or \$200,000 for this purpose, the legislature would back you up in it?

Gov. RIGGS. I really did not think so, Senator, but of course it is not a good thing to assume—

Senator SMOOR. If they will not do that when they have the money in their own pockets, why should they come to the Government and ask the Government to do it?

Gov. RIGGS. I thought you were referring to the Government.

Senator SMOOT. No, no; I mean the Territorial legislature of Alaska.

The CHAIRMAN. You say there is about \$600,000 in the treasury of Alaska now?

Gov. RIGGS. There is about \$600,000 in the treasury of Alaska; yes, sir.

Senator JONES. But you said that was in 1917.

Gov. RIGGS. December 31, 1917. Our reports are made for the calendar year.

Senator JONES. What about this last year, 1918?

Gov. RIGGS. The amount is about the same, if I remember right. It has not changed very much from that.

Senator JONES. So you think there is six or seven hundred thousand dollars in the Territorial treasury?

Gov. RIGGS. Between half a million and six hundred thousand dollars; yes, sir. But there is this point: The United States Government does nothing for the Indians of Alaska. They are the only Indians in the United States who are not supported, if necessity arises, by the Government of the United States. Ninety per cent of this relief is for the Indians. The Bureau of Education has schools with a small appropriation, an insufficient appropriation.

The CHAIRMAN. I understood, from the figures you read there, that the taxation was about a million dollars.

Gov. RIGGS. Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH of Maryland. And what is the balance in the treasury now?

Gov. RIGGS. \$682,000 on December 31, 1917.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. 1917?

The CHAIRMAN. But he says it is about the same now.

Gov. RIGGS. It is within about \$100,000 of that; I think that is the way it stands.

The CHAIRMAN. I see the last sundry civil bill carried an appropriation of \$75,000.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. That was for officers, and all that.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, no; this was for the Public Health Service.

Gov. RIGGS. Was it not \$62,000, Senator?

The CHAIRMAN. \$75,000.

Gov. RIGGS. For Alaska?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir.

Gov. RIGGS. Well, that was probably for maintenance.

The CHAIRMAN (reading):

To provide for the medical and sanitary relief of the Eskimos, Aleuts, Indians, and other natives of Alaska; erection, purchase, repair, rental, and equipment of hospital buildings; books and surgical apparatus; pay and necessary traveling expenses of physicians, nurses, and other employees, and all other necessary miscellaneous expenses which are not included under the above special heads, \$75,000.

So it seems that \$75,000 was appropriated specifically for the health work there.

Gov. RIGGS. For the health of the natives, Senator. I think with that they have maintained the five small hospitals at various points; then they have their model settlements, like the ones of Hyderabad and Nuevic.

The CHAIRMAN. You have the money there; the trouble is to get the legislature together to appropriate it? Is that the trouble? There is \$600,000 in your treasury, so that you would not seem to be in any distress.

Gov. RIGGS. Senator, it seems to be the opinion of the members of the Territorial legislature to whom I have talked that the Indians are not really the wards of the Territory; that the Indians are always considered the wards of the Government.

The CHAIRMAN. That is a rather strained idea. I do not see why the people there should not be taken care of, as far as possible, by taxation.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. I want to say, in justification of what the governor has said, that I have been through some of this—

Senator JONES. Yes; that is true in the States.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. I have through this for about 35 years, and when it comes to putting on 10,000 white people, with very little resources, the protection of forty, fifty, or sixty thousand Indians, they have no right to demand of the people of Alaska that any such thing shall be done. When the people of Alaska sustain the Alaskan government for themselves they have paid about all the taxes that any people on earth can bear.

Senator SMOOT. Well, Senator Smith, is it not true that the Indians of Alaska own their own property and pay their own taxes and pay a fair proportion of the taxes paid in Alaska?

Senator SMITH of Arizona. If they do, my statement would be modified to that extent, but the taxes taken from those Indians all go back to the Indians, I have no doubt.

Senator SMITH of Maryland. The governor states that half a million dollars is raised from the taxation of industrials. It is not the citizens themselves that are taxed.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. I thought he said 60 per cent of that would have to go to the Indians. Is that correct, Governor?

Gov. RIGGS. Ninety per cent of this would have to go to the Indians.

Senator JONES. Ninety per cent of what?

Gov. RIGGS. Of any appropriation made for the relief of influenza.

Senator JONES. Not of the taxes?

Gov. RIGGS. Not of the taxes; no. The Indians, particularly the Indians affected, Senator, are not taxpayers.

Senator SMOOT. But Senator Smith's remark was as to the percentage of the taxes collected that goes to the Indians. How much of that goes to the Indians?

Gov. RIGGS. I think none at all, except in the matter of indigent relief. We spend probably fifteen or twenty thousand dollars a year for indigent relief up there from the Territorial funds.

Senator SMOOT. Do you know what percentage of tax the Indians pay up there?

Gov. RIGGS. It is very small—negligible.

Senator SMOOT. But perhaps as much as you expend upon them?

Gov. RIGGS. Possibly.

Senator WEEKS. Governor, what is the rate of taxation in Alaska?

Gov. RIGGS. There is no rate of taxation. It is largely a commodity tax—so much for a case of salmon, so much for a barrel of fish oil.

Senator WEEKS. Do you not tax corporations?

Gov. RIGGS. Yes; but the receipts from that source are not very large.

Senator WEEKS. What is the rate of tax you impose on corporations?

Gov. RIGGS. The corporation taxes are largely collected by the United States Government, and go into what is called the Alaskan fund, which is arbitrarily allotted by the United States Government, 65 per cent for roads, 25 per cent for education, and 10 per cent for indigents. If you care to hear it, I have a complete tax list here which I can read to you.

Senator WEEKS. Never mind.

Senator JONES. I want to suggest, Senator Martin, that this appropriation that we made there was simply for the ordinary care of these natives—not to meet an emergency like this, or anything of that sort. It was not contemplated.

The CHAIRMAN. Besides that \$75,000, we appropriated \$215,000.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. For what?

The CHAIRMAN (reading):

To enable the Secretary of the Interior, in his discretion and under his direction, to provide for the education and support of the Eskimos, Aleuts, Indians, and other natives of Alaska; erection, repair, and rental of school buildings; text books and industrial apparatus; pay and necessary traveling expenses of superintendents, teachers, physicians, and other employees, and all other necessary miscellaneous expenses which are not included under the above special heads, \$215,000.

Senator JONES. That is an annual appropriation. We have been doing that every year, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. That is what we are doing in a broadcast way. We are giving \$215,000 in one place, and \$75,000 in another place, to take care of the native population.

Senator JONES. That is true.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. That \$215,000 is for the ordinary care of the Indians, as you state. With the Indians scattered as they are in Alaska, that is a very small item as compared with what we give for the support and education of the Indians everywhere else—down in my country, and in Utah, and all through the West. It has been wrong from the start, and it is wrong now; but until we make a change closer home—

The CHAIRMAN. What difficulty is there in the way of using this \$600,000 now in your treasury? Why can not that be used for the relief of these people?

Gov. RIGGS. The people of Alaska consider that the money raised by taxes from the white people of Alaska should be spent for the improvements of the Territory. They need the money in roads a great deal. They want to spend more on roads; they want to spend more on the white schools; they want to spend more on their own sanitation.

There are various things, such as police protection, policing of the territory; that is one of the things that are coming up; and, as I have tried to express myself, they want to have the Indians in Alaska placed more on a parity with the Indians of other parts of the United States, where they are taken care of and looked after by the United States Government.

Our Indians are not given anything for their support. They get not 1 cent for support. They are self-supporting Indians. They have never been reservation Indians. They have been roving Indians, and fishing and trapping Indians, and have maintained themselves; and I would not be asking for any money for these Indians except for his epidemic that has swept the whole Territory and is causing all of this distress and devastation.

The CHAIRMAN. Referring to the \$170,000 you have expended on this epidemic, what fund was that from?

Gov. RIGGS. There is no fund for it, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. You must have gotten it from some fund. You said you expended it.

Gov. RIGGS. I have authorized the expenditure. I have not spent it. I have authorized the expenditure. I have done that on my personal credit.

Senator KENYON. Can you not keep on doing that until the legislature meets?

Senator SMOOT. Could you expend this amount before the legislature does meet?

Gov. RIGGS. I can pay the bills I have already authorized. I am positive the legislature will not let me suffer any more than they have to; but then it is a question whether this should be properly charged against the Territory. If it were just for the white people of the Territory, I would take the chances, and say, "Let the legislature do it."

Senator KENYON. Governor, how much do you need, from now until the legislature meets, to take care of this particular influenza question?

Gov. RIGGS. I have a partial list, which runs up to \$107,500. I have 150 Eskimo orphans on my hands for whose support I have authorized the payment of \$10 a month each. I have perhaps a thousand Indians unburied, and the best price I can get—they have to thaw the ground for graves with steam—is \$30 an Indian.

The CHAIRMAN. Governor, do you know how much of this \$75,000 appropriation for medical relief remains unexpended?

Gov. RIGGS. None of it. They have spent it all. The Bureau of Education have used every solitary cent they possibly could scrape together.

Senator KENYON. Governor, you did not answer my question. How much money do you need now to carry this work on until the legislature meets, approximately?

Senator SMOOT. You have January and February—two months.

Senator KENYON. Yes. Now, how much do you need to get through this time? I do not care for what you have authorized. Cut that out.

Gov. RIGGS. I will need \$150,000.

Senator KENYON. Then this \$200,000 will not pay what you have already authorized and the \$150,000.

Gov. RIGGS. I mean, to pay what I have already authorized and keep me going until the legislature meets, I would have to have an appropriation of \$150,000.

Senator SMOOT. That is, to pay what he has already authorized, and what he expects to spend between now and the time the legislature meets.

Senator KENYON. But you have authorized, as I understand, \$107,000; so that the difference between \$150,000 and \$107,000—\$43,000—would carry you through until the legislature meets?

Gov. RIGGS. Possibly. I do not know how far this thing is going to go.

Senator KENYON. \$50,000 will carry you through, leaving this other question for itself.

Gov. RIGGS. I have asked for \$200,000, or such part of it as may be necessary.

Senator JONES. You can not determine definitely the amount you will need?

Gov. RIGGS. No; Senator. The epidemic has now spread to the Kuskokwim, with its population of, perhaps, 1,000 Indians there. You see the Territory is so vast, and one can not get around it, therefore, we can not get all the reports in. There is nearly 600,000 miles of territory there. It is two and a quarter times the size of the State of Texas.

Senator KENYON. You have not any doctors there, have you?

Gov. RIGGS. We have very few doctors. We have an Indian doctor at a place called Nulaka, on the Yukon River, and then for 500 miles either way we have not a doctor.

Senator KENYON. Just what do you do with the money? You have no doctors; you have no nurses.

Gov. RIGGS. I have been sending itinerant doctors to attend the victims; the Bureau of Education has sent out relief parties that have been instructed in the handling of influenza and of pneumonia, and gathering up the orphans, and relieving destitution where it exists.

Senator JONES. And that is the way you would use this money if it is given to you?

Gov. RIGGS. That is exactly the way we would use this money if it is given to us. I do not care who gets the money to spend—the Public Health Service or the Bureau of Education—for I do not care about spending it myself; I would rather not, in fact, so long as we relieve the awful situation that we have there.

Senator WEEKS. Mr. Chairman, do you contemplate passing that appropriation of \$100,000,000 to feed the people of Europe?

The CHAIRMAN. I shall support it myself. I do not know what the Congress will do with it.

Senator WEEKS. I think we might take whatever appropriation is required for this purpose out of that.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you think this is as important as that?

Senator SHAFROTH. If we are going to feed foreigners it seems to me we ought to feed our own people.

Senator JONES. I think so, too.

Senator SMOOT. It is not a question of feeding them; it is a question of taking care of them.

Senator SHAFROTH. It is a question of preserving their lives or letting them starve to death.

Senator JONES. It is a good deal a matter of feeding them, too.

Gov. RIGGS. There is a good deal of feeding to be done, too, Senator.

Senator SMOOT. Do you want to say anything more?

Gov. RIGGS. I think I have covered the matter, unless you want me to go into some documentary evidence here, which I hardly think is necessary.

I can submit to the committee a little list that I made up, as far as I know it. This may contain duplications, or may be inaccurate, but it gives the conditions as far as I can come at it.

(Gov. Riggs then read the following table:)

Influenza.

	Cases.	Deaths.		Cases.	Deaths.
Kake.....	65	.....	Anchorage (Indians).....	.....	8
Juneau.....	500	30	Susitna.....	.....	24
Sitka.....	300	20	Metlavalta.....	.....	4
Killsnoo.....	50	8	Hyderabad.....	.....	6
Nome.....	.....	1,000	Hoonah.....	.....	2
Hamilton.....	130	42	Ketchikan.....	500	20
St. Michael (Dec. 27).....	.....	40	Deering.....	.....	149
Prince of Wales.....	300	295	Yakutat (Dec. 1).....	74	4
Cook Inlet.....	.....	74	Kodiak.....	300	40

Approximately 2,000 deaths in all. Solomon, Teller, and Mary Igloo-wiped out.

PARTIAL ESTIMATES OF EXPENSE INCURRED TO DATE.

Nome.....	\$70,000	St. Michael.....	\$2,000
Towns near Juneau.....	5,000	Lighthouse Bureau.....	\$2,200
Cordova.....	9,000	Orphans:	
Latouche.....	7,500	Susitna.....	20
Fairbanks.....	5,000	Nome.....	100
Nenana.....	5,000	St. Michael.....	5
Marshall.....	2,000		

Gov. RIGGS. A great many of these have increased, because you can not get the returns from them.

Senator SHAFROTH. Was the intensity of the epidemic greatest in warm weather or in cold weather?

Gov. RIGGS. In cold weather. I take that to be due to the crowding of the Eskimos and the Indians. It took the white people in cold weather just the same as it did in warm weather. It did not seem to make any difference.

Senator SHAFROTH. There is no such thing as freezing out the germ, then, by cold weather?

Gov. RIGGS. It has not worked that way in Alaska.

Senator SMOOT. There is no germ with it.

Senator SHAFROTH. Well, that may be. They are trying to find something as to the cause.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there anything else, Governor?

Gov. RIGGS. No; except that I sincerely hope this committee will grant the relief that I am asking, because the epidemic is not over; it is spreading. It is spreading to regions that we thought we had barred off but they are not barred off, and the epidemic is not half over.

I should like to draw your attention, if I may, for just one minute, to the action of the Canadian Government. When they heard that there was influenza in Alaska and on the coast, without waiting for the influenza to reach their own natives, they sent out patrols of the Northwest Mounted Police loaded with medical supplies and with food supplies, and they were told not to come home until they had controlled the epidemic and it was over, without any limit as to how far they should go.

**STATEMENT OF RUPERT BLUE, SURGEON GENERAL OF THE
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE.**

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Blue, we should like to have any information you can give us about this health condition in Alaska.

Surg. Gen. BLUE. The act approved October 1, 1918, appropriating \$1,000,000 for the suppression of influenza does not warrant us in furnishing relief for destitution. The act contemplated medical, surgical, and nursing relief only, and, of course, the purchase of medical supplies. On October 6 we authorized the governor by wire to employ as many doctors as were necessary to meet the situation, and also to purchase the necessary medicines. The doctors were not to be had in Alaska, so we raised the requisite number of doctors in the State of Washington, and sent them up on a vessel that had been furnished us by the Navy, the collier *Brutus*.

Up to this time there have been employed and paid for 19 doctors and 3 nurses. That is about all we have been able to do for the situation in Alaska.

Senator SMOOT. Could you get any more doctors if you wanted them and could pay for them?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. We could get more; yes, sir.

Senator OVERMAN. What are your reports from there?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Our reports are not up to date, I am sorry to say. The last wire that I had from Dr. Krolisch, who is in charge, stated that the second outbreak had subsided and that he would be able in a short time to relieve some of the doctors that he had there.

Senator SMITH of Maryland. That would indicate that there were enough doctors there.

Surg. Gen. BLUE. That refers only, I think, to the report of accessible ports; not to the interior regions, as has been described by Gov. Riggs. I want to say, however, that the situation in Alaska with regard to destitution among the Indians is appalling. The influenza has been peculiarly fatal to them. It has left a great many orphans and other helpless people in its wake.

Senator WEEKS. How much of that appropriation that was made by Congress have you expended?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. We have a balance of about \$150,000, Senator.

Senator WEEKS. Was the appropriation a million?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. The appropriation was a million dollars.

Senator WEEKS. Have you heavy calls for that in this country?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes, sir; we are receiving frequent calls.

Senator WEEKS. Do you think that will carry you over the epidemic?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. I am afraid it will not carry us over until June 30.

Senator SMOOT. Where was the most of it spent, Doctor?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. In the United States. Every State of the Union, you know, had a severe outbreak, and now we are witnessing the tail end of the second outbreak in places.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. Was that million dollars, Doctor, to be dedicated to Alaska itself? Was the million-dollar appropriation of which you spoke for the relief of Alaska itself?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Oh, no, sir; that was for the relief of the United States.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. That is what I was asking.

Senator JONES. There was not any suggestion that we should wait until the legislatures should meet before we made that million-dollar appropriation, was there?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. No, sir.

Senator SMITH of Maryland. Has some of that been expended for Alaska?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes, sir. I can not tell you exactly what amount, however.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. He says he has employed 19 doctors and 3 nurses.

Senator SMITH of Maryland. And you have purchased medicines?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Medicines—yes, sir.

Gov. RIGGS. Senator Martin, if you have no more questions to ask me, may I be excused? I have an engagement at the Postmaster General's office, and I do not want to keep him waiting.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; I know of no other questions to be asked.

Senator KENYON. Has the governmental operation of that railroad up there has been pretty successful, Governor?

Gov. RIGGS. There has been no operation yet. The period of construction has not ceased.

(Gov. Riggs then left the committee room.)

The CHAIRMAN. As I understand, your relief has been limited to doctors, nurses, and medical supplies?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. We have not been able, with the funds we have had, to do anything else.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you know of any want of doctors, nurses, and medicines existing at this time? Has it been called to your attention?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. I do not know of any, except that there is a request from the governor to allow us to send three doctors into the interior by dog team, and we have authorized that.

Senator OVERMAN. You have authorized that?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes, sir.

Senator SMOOT. Could you not pay that out of your balance of the appropriation?

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, yes; he says he is doing that.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. He has done that.

The CHAIRMAN. So you have met all the requisitions made on you?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes, sir; we have met every request that has been made upon us by Alaska or any other section of the country.

Senator JONES. But you have done nothing in the interior of Alaska, as I understand, General?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. No, sir; not so far—not that I know of.

Senator JONES. Your activities have been confined to the ports?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. To the accessible places; yes, sir.

Senator JONES. Dr. Claxton is here, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. That gives all the information you can give us about the situation there?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. You have met all the demands made on you?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And the last thing you did was to send some nurses and doctors into the interior?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. To send three doctors into the interior.

Senator OVERMAN. If we should give this money to another organization and administration than yours, there would be conflict between the Public Health Service and the other, would there not? Is it not customary to let the Public Health Service administer this fund? Ought it not to be there?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. I do not think the Public Health Service ought to administer a fund to relieve destitution.

Senator OVERMAN. No; I am speaking of health and sanitation in connection with the epidemic of influenza.

Surg. Gen. BLUE. For health and sanitation I think that is so; yes, sir.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. I do not see how there could be any possible conflict between the Territory and the Public Health Service on the question of want and poverty and suffering of the people, because the Government is confining itself simply to the medical phase of the matter, and I understand Dr. Blue is referring to general destitution and the demands of ordinary humanity.

Surg. Gen. BLUE. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that the Bureau of Education has always looked after the health of the Indians in Alaska.

Senator JONES. That is what I was going to suggest—that we appropriate money for medical relief for the Bureau of Education, and you do not have anything to do with the expenditure of that.

Surg. Gen. BLUE. No, sir. We furnish them with expert advice only, and it seems to me it ought to remain that way.

The CHAIRMAN. You have no other information that you think of in this connection?

Surg. Gen. BLUE. No, sir; nothing more.

Senator JONES. Mr. Claxton, of the Bureau of Education, is here. He can tell you about the medical relief that the Bureau of Education furnishes there and the condition that they know to exist.

The CHAIRMAN. We will hear Mr. Claxton, then. I hope he will be brief, because the governor, who is right from there, has given us a full picture of it from personal observation, and Mr. Claxton has not been there.

STATEMENT OF PHILANDER P. CLAXTON, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION.

Dr. CLAXTON. I suppose the information the governor has given you, Mr. Chairman, is probably later also than ours. What I have is from our superintendents in the several districts.

The influenza epidemic in Alaska has been very severe. We have lost certainly more than 1,200 people up to the end of December. It is probably a good many more than that, because the Territory is so very large; the districts are so large, and our superintendents necessarily do not get full information very quickly; that is, they can not keep it up to date. But on December 28 in the five districts they had 1,126 deaths reported, and that leaves several hundred orphan children to be cared for. Our medical relief fund for the entire district of Alaska Territory is only \$75,000, and that was practically all budgeted for our five or six hospitals and for our eight physicians and eleven nurses at those hospitals and elsewhere,

so that we were totally unprepared to meet the conditions arising out of this epidemic. I am confident that all of the \$200,000 asked for in the joint resolution before you will be needed for the relief of destitution if it is anything like so great among the white people as it is among the natives.

Senator SMOOT. Well, it is not. The governor says most of it is among the natives.

Dr. CLAXTON. Probably it is mostly among the natives. It seems to have been more severe among them. For instance, in Nome there were about 300 natives. One hundred and seventy-six of those had died at our last report from Nome—more than half of them—and in the Nome district 750 had been reported to us by the 28th of December. It seems to have been more severe among the adult men and women than among the children. For that reason, large numbers of orphan children are left, and they must be cared for in some way. It is suggested by our superintendent there that they be put under the church missions up there, and the expenses paid, and that as soon as possible we erect some kind of institution into which they can be put and cared for and educated at the same time.

The telegrams that come from there corroborate everything that I have said, and a good deal more. You probably will not care to have those read. I can read them if desired.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, no; I do not think we should go into detail like that. The governor has covered all these matters to which you allude from recent personal observation, while yours is a theory.

Dr. CLAXTON. Ours is from the report of our superintendents. I immediately sent the superintendent of schools of Alaska there. We have a superintendent in each of the five districts and have means of reaching most of the schools and quite a number of small villages in which they have no schools as yet. We have no direct reports from them, and they would need to be added to what we have here.

Senator JONES. Is there any part of your \$75,000 appropriated for medical relief in Alaska that could be used for this purpose now?

Dr. CLAXTON. They are using some of it. Approximately \$7,000 was not budgeted, but simply held for incidentals until the end of the year, for emergencies; but, of course, that has been used up long ago. All I could do, when we were informed of the conditions there, was to authorize our superintendents to do whatever was necessary, in the hope that we should be able to pay for it out of some emergency appropriation. We could not afford to let the people go without care and let the children die.

Senator JONES. Have you any estimate as to what they have obligated themselves or obligated the Government for?

Dr. CLAXTON. I have not full estimates as to that; but in one place it is \$5,000, and in another place \$2,000, and at another place it is costing \$10 a month for 90 orphan children. At Nome there are 90 orphan children, and it is costing us about \$10 a month to care for those. We have done everything we could in the emergency. I should think all of that fund would be needed.

Senator WEEKS. Dr. Claxton, how did you originally come to take control of an activity of this kind?

Dr. CLAXTON. I was not Commissioner of Education at that time; but when we bought Alaska we bought with it the natives, of course. They came to us, and the responsibility for them. For a good many

years practically nothing was done by the Federal Government either for their education or for their support. About 1890 the Bureau of Education began to cooperate with Dr. Sheldon Jackson, of the Presbyterian Mission Board, in the care of the natives, and bringing over reindeer, and training the natives to herd reindeer, and so on; and soon after that the whole responsibility was taken over by the Bureau of Education. Just what year it was, I do not remember.

Senator WEEKS. Does the Commissioner of Indian Affairs have anything to do with it?

Dr. CLAXTON. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs has nothing to do with it. The Bureau of Education is the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the 27,000 Indians in Alaska.

Senator CURTIS. The only thing the Bureau of Indian Affairs does is to bring part of them out of that country into the States for educational purposes.

Senator WEEKS. Why does not the Commissioner of Indian Affairs have control of the Indians of Alaska?

Dr. CLAXTON. I do not know. It was left to the Bureau of Education. The great problem there has been the education of the natives. The burden of their support has not been large. We have ordinarily given about \$2,000 a year for the relief of indigents.

Senator CURTIS. They are largely self-supporting?

Dr. CLAXTON. Largely self-supporting. Our policy up there has been to give them industrial education, and make them self-supporting as rapidly as possible. Little was done for their medical relief until quite recently, when Congress has given us first \$25,000, and then it was increased finally to \$75,000, for these hospitals. With the cooperation of the Public Health Service, we have had a careful study made of the health conditions there.

Senator SMITH of Arizona. May I ask, in that connection, about this matter of the education of the Indians? I have been looking into it pretty closely for over 30 years. Is the education of the Alaska Indian confined, as it has largely been in our Western States, to learning to read and write, sing psalms, and play on a harp; or has it been in an industrial line, to teach the Indian to work and become self-supporting?

Dr. CLAXTON. It has been chiefly industrial, sir. We have gone on the theory in Alaska that the education of the children must be in the community where their parents live. We therefore have not established boarding schools to which the children have gone away from their parents; and the teacher becomes a director, as far as he or she can, of the industries of the community.

The most important industrial education so far is that of the care of reindeer. The 10,000 Eskimos living north of the north-western district own about 100,000 reindeer, an average of 10 or 11 for each man, woman, and child there; and through that in one generation they have been lifted from the stage of civilization in which they depended on hunting and fishing up to that in which they can determine their own welfare by their own industry. I think the fact that we spend in all Alaska less than an average of \$2,000 a year for the relief of poverty shows the character of education that we have given there.

Senator KENYON. Do you have any donations from any source to use for those things?

Dr. CLAXTON. No.

Senator KENYON. Or do you cooperate with any boards?

Dr. CLAXTON. No. The policy of cooperation ceased about 1894, Dr. Hamilton tells me.

Are there any other questions?

The CHAIRMAN. I think not.

(Thereupon, at 3.45 o'clock p. m., the committee went into executive session.)



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